How can I protect myself from hepatitis B?

The younger you are when you get hepatitis B, the sicker you can be. So, get three hepatitis B shots. All babies, children, and teens should get the shots.

Should adults get hepatitis B shots?

Adults should get three hepatitis B shots if they are:

- in contact with blood or body fluids of a person who has hepatitis B
- men who have sex with men
- having sex with more than one partner or with a partner who shoots drugs
- using needles to shoot drugs
- living in the same house with someone who has hepatitis B

How safe is the vaccine?

The hepatitis B vaccine is one of the safest vaccines there is. It has been used in the United States since 1982 and has been shown to be safe and effective.

Where can I get hepatitis B shots?

Talk to your doctor or nurse to see if you need the shots.



Call your doctor, your local health department or

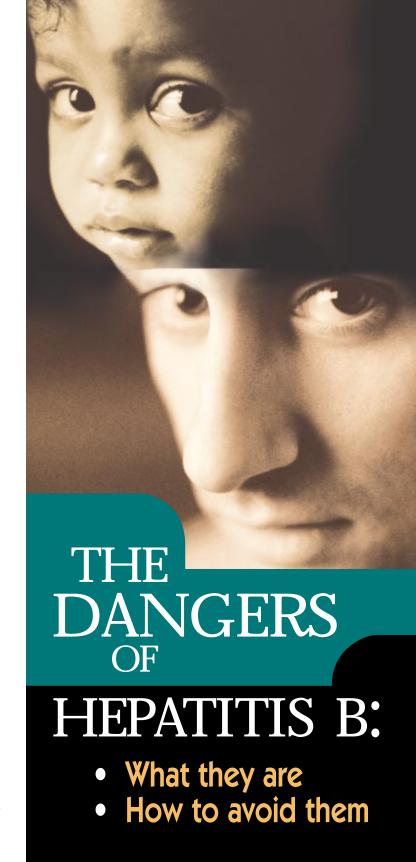
1-888-76-SHOTS

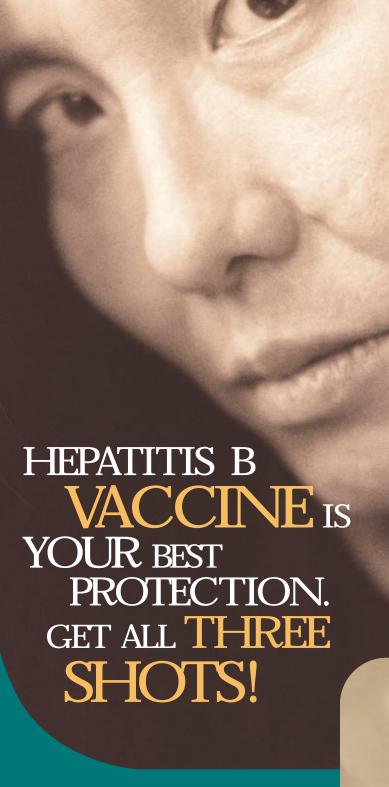


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What is hepatitis B?

Hepatitis B is a disease caused by a virus that infects the liver. It can lead to severe illness, life-long disease, scarring (cirrhosis) of the liver, liver failure, liver cancer or death.

How do people get hepatitis B?

Hepatitis B is spread from person to person through blood and other body fluids. You can get it from a person who has hepatitis B by:

- coming in contact with their blood or body fluids
- having unprotected sex with them
- sharing toothbrushes, razors, nail clippers, or needles with them
- sharing ear piercing, body piercing or tattooing equipment with them

Some people (30%-40%) who get hepatitis B do not have any of these risk factors. Most people with hepatitis B don't know they have it because they don't show signs of illness.

A pregnant woman who has hepatitis B can give it to her baby at birth. Babies born to these mothers need to get the first shot of vaccine and another shot called HBIG at birth. These babies also need a second shot at one month, a third shot at six months, and a blood test by one year of age.

People with signs of hepatitis may:

- feel tired all the time
- have mild fever
- have aching muscles or joints
- have stomach pain
- have an upset stomach
- have diarrhea
- throw up a lot
- have jaundice (yellowing of skin or eyes)
- have dark urine
- have light-colored stools
- not feel hungry

You **cannot** look at someone and tell that he or she has hepatitis B. The only way for people to know if they have hepatitis B is to get a blood test.

What happens if I get hepatitis B?

People can recover from hepatitis B in about six months, or they can have it for the rest of their lives. People with hepatitis B can:

- give it to others
- have no signs of being ill for many years
- feel just mildly tired or ill
- suffer serious liver problems, such as cirrhosis (scarring) or cancer

